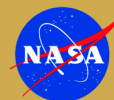


No Dog and Pony Shows, Thank You

by Todd Post



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Todd Post is the editor of ASK Magazine and a

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He has written for many publications both in print and online. To contact Todd send him an email at tpost@edutechltd.com and tell him what you think about this issue of ASK.

Not everyone looks forward to reviews. Dog and pony shows I've heard them called. Exercises in putting together Power Point charts. Other less tasteful descriptions abound, but I won't bother to summarize these. This is a tasteful magazine after all. In this issue, we've assembled a number of articles on the subject of reviews, particularly as they occur in the NASA project world (although we cover the subject from other perspectives too).

Veteran NASA Project Manager Marty Davis, in his article *Tangled Up in Reviews* writes, "Many people regard reviews as something onerous, but if we can tailor them so that they're not as bad as they have to be, it can be a great benefit to a project manager." Great benefits to the project manager is what you'll find in Marty's story as he describes not only tailoring a single review but the entire lifecycle of reviews in his project.

In Jo Gunderson's story, *Calling Down the Fire on Yourself*, she describes a young NASA Project Manager who does just that because, as he tells her, "I needed to know if there was anything that I had overlooked." How he brings fire down on himself at his project review will inspire other young Project Managers, seasoned managers, and anyone else who reads this powerful story.

Leave Your Ego at the Door by Jenny Baer-Reidhart and Ray Morgan, uses reviews to highlight the creative collaboration that existed between NASA and one of its industry partners. The protagonist of this story is a company who took advantage of NASA's expert advice during reviews and accomplished amazing feats as a result. The story also examines how disasters might well have been avoided by two other NASA partners had they been as open minded as the first company during their reviews.

In Roy Malone's story, *Standing Offer*, a NASA Project Manager describes how he used a crack review team to help him pass a critical certification inspection while he was a Combat Systems Officer in the Navy. Malone invited the reviewers to come back several times so that they would be able to focus in detail on the many areas of the program that would be scrutinized during the certification inspection.

These are just a sampling of some of the articles you'll find in this issue of ASK

We believe this issue offers ample evidence that talented Project Managers know how to use reviews to the great benefit of their projects. A talented Project Manager will typically figure out a way to turn any onerous task into a useful learning exercise. These Project Managers demonstrate that the real value of reviews is that they provide a chance to learn something. No dog and pony shows here.